

Message Text

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TAGS: SPOP, VE

SUBJECT: AVPF-IPPF-GOV CONFLICT WORSENS

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1. THE GOV-VENEZUELAN FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION (AVPF) CONFLICT REPORTED REFTEL HAS WORSENERED AND MAY PRODUCE ADVERSE PUBLICITY FOR THE U.S. AS WELL AS CONTINUING TO HAMPER THE SMOOTH DEVELOPMENT OF VENEZUELAN FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS. THE INTERNATIONAL PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION (IPPF) WESTERN HEMISPHERE DIVISION TO WHICH THE AVPF IS AFFILIATED HAS IDENTIFIED ITSELF WITH THE FAMILY PLANNING DIVISION OF THE HEALTH MINISTRY (SAS) IN THE ONGOING DISPUTE AND IS ATTEMPTING TO DIS-AFFILIATE THE AVPF. AN IPPF INSPECTION TEAM CONSISTING OF AN AUSTRALIAN, A SWEDE, A LEBANESE AND AN INTERPRETER IS EXPECTED ON JULY 19 TO EXAMINE THE SITUATION AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE IPPF ABOUT AVPF DISAFFILIATION. AVPF WOULD BE DISAFFILIATED ON THE GROUNDS OF "INACTIVITY." AVPF PRESIDENT LIENDO COLL HAS TOLD THE POPULATION OFFICER THAT HE AND HIS SUPPORTERS PLAN TO PUBLICLY ATTACK THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE DIVISION OF IPPF AND ITS CHIEF, BENJAMIN VIEL, FOR UNWARRANTED INTERFERENCE IN THE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF VENEZUELA. ACCORDING TO LIENDO COLL THE IPPF IS CONSIDERED SYNONYMOUS WITH THE UNITED STATES BY MANY VENEZUELAN, AN IMPRESSION REINFORCED BY THE FACT THAT THE AID SUPPLIED IPPF CONTRACEPTIVES DISTRIBUTED BY THE GOV FAMILY PLANNING CLINICS CARRY GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

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SPECIFICATIONS IN ENGLISH ON THE PACKAGES.

2. THE GOV'S CHIEF FAMILY PLANNER, SANTIAGO GOSLANDS, STATES THAT THE IPPF WESTERN HEMISPHERE DIVISION - AVPF DISPUTE OVER AFFILIATION IS A PRIVATE MATTER WHICH DOES NOT CONCERN THE GOV. HE ADDS THAT HE HAS ASKED FOR FUNDS FOR CALENDAR 1977 TO PROCURE HIS OWN CONTRACEPTIVES AND THUS WILL NO LONGER BE DEPENDENT ON THE LARGESS OF AID AND IPPF FOR THIS CRITICAL ELEMENT OF HIS PROGRAM (GOSLANDO HAS BEEN RECEIVING HIS CONTRACEPTIVES DIRECTLY FROM IPPF WITHOUT HAVING TO GO THROUGH AVPF SINCE A VIEL VISIT IN FEBRUARY OF THIS YEAR). GOSLANDE DID STATE THAT THE HEALTH MINISTER HAS CANCELLED HIS APPOINTMENT WITH THE IPPF INSPECTION TEAM AFTER A JULY 14 ACCUSATION BY TELEVISION PERSONALITY SOFIA IMBER THAT SAS IS "BRIBING" THE IPPF TO DISAFFILIATE AVPF BECAUSE AVPF HAD BEEN CRITICAL OF THE SAS FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM. IMBER IS A GOOD FRIEND OF AVPF'S LIENDO COLL AND AN OUTSPOKEN SUPPORTER OF FAMILY PLANNING. GOSLANDE WILL MEET WITH THE GROUP INSTEAD OF THE MINISTER.

3. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY IS NOT AS PESSIMISTIC AS LIENDO COLL ABOUT THE INEVITABILITY OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THE CURRENT DISPUTE, PARTICULARLY GIVEN THE FACT THAT NO USCS ARE INVOLVED. IN ANY EVENT THERE SEEMS LITTLE WE CAN DO AT THIS POINT. ON ONE MATTER ALL AGREE. SERIOUS DAMAGE IS BEING DONE TO FAMILY PLANNING IN VENEZUELA BY THE INTENSE MUTUAL DISLIKE OF GOSLANDE AND LIENDO COLL. GOSLANDE REPRESENTS THE GOV AND THE OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM, BUT LIENDO COLL RETAINS CONTROL OVER MANY OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MEMBERS OF THE PRO-FAMILY PLANNING ELEMENTS OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR. THESE ELITE OPINION MAKERS, RATHER THAN SUPPORTING THE GOV PROGRAM AND USING THEIR DONATIONS TO FINANCE PROGRESSIVE METHODS OF FAMILY PLANNING LIKE VOLUNTARY STERILIZATION AND UNCONVENTIONAL METHODS OF DISTRIBUTING CONTRACEPTIVES, ARE INSTEAD DEDICATING THEMSELVES TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE HEAD OF THE GOV PROGRAM. BOTH GOSLANDO AND LIENDO COLL ARE DIFFICULT AND IMPLACABLE PERSONALITIES WITH LEGIONS OF PERSONAL ENEMIES. IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE A RECONCILIATION OR A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM AS LONG AS THEY BOTH REMAIN IN VENEZUELA.

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